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Security Council

Seventieth ye..

Provisional

7468th meeting
Tuesday, 23 June 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Ibrahim	(Malaysia)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Cherif
	Chile	Ms. Sapag Muñoz de la Peña
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Ms. Murmokaitė
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Méndez Graterol

Agenda

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2015/426)

Letter dated 16 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/444)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Mali

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2015/426)

Letter dated 16 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2015/444)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Mali to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Diop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Integration and International Cooperation of the Republic of Mali.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Mongi Hamdi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/426, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali. I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/444, which contains a letter dated 16 June 2015 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Hamdi.

Mr. Hamdi (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to address the Security Council in my capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization in Mali (MINUSMA). The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Mali (S/2015/426), which the Council has before it, follows resolution 2100 (2013) of 25 April 2013, which established MINUSMA.

As the Security Council discusses renewing the mandate of MINUSMA, I will also take this opportunity to take stock of the challenges facing the Mission and short- and medium-term perspectives.

Last Saturday, 20 June, we attended the final stage of the signing of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. It was a great day of peace for Mali, a historic day. Today we have a global and inclusive agreement, that is to say, signed by all parties to the conflict: the Government, the Azawad movements Coordination and the Platform coalition. The Agreement was negotiated in less than a year, with the support of international mediation efforts led by Algeria. It is a political, institutional, security, humanitarian and development compromise that will enable Malians to rebuild their nation on strong foundations.

Of course, the Agreement is not peace itself, as peace cannot be decreed, but it establishes the conditions for building peace and lays out the best way to get there. Of course, the Agreement is not itself reconciliation among the various communities of Mali, but it provides a foundation on which to rebuild Mali. Of course, the challenges ahead are many, because rebuilding is more difficult than destroying. However, I am convinced of the goodwill of the majority of women, men and youth from all regions of Mali, with whom I speak on a daily basis.

Throughout the negotiation process, we have consistently reminded the parties to the conflict and the Malian people of the special nature of this new agreement as compared with previous ones. We have stressed, among other things, the involvement of the international community, either through the presence of a United Nations mission or in mediation during negotiations, but also in the implementation of the Agreement.

Concretely, the people of Mali, particularly those of the northern regions, ask for only one thing: security and the return of basic social services, especially health and education. To get there, a real, ongoing and animated dialogue must be established among Malians, one inspired by a spirit of compromise and founded on trust and mutual respect. In that respect, I welcome the Government's inclusion of the Peace Agreement in its general policy programme, which was presented two weeks ago to the National Assembly.

The weeks and months ahead will be critical. It is imperative to begin to take concrete action so that the Malian people can begin to see and feel the dividends

of peace. With that, I launch a strong appeal to the international community and financial institutions regarding the need to begin funding the implementation of the Peace Agreement as soon as possible.

(*spoke in English*)

In spite of notable progress on the political front, the security situation remains fragile. The recent violations of the ceasefire agreements and the clashes are a stark reminder of the complexity and unpredictability of the security environment in the northern regions of Mali. I welcome the withdrawal of the Platform from Ménaka, where the Mission continues to reinforce its presence and support arrangements to ensure the protection of civilians.

The security provisions in the Peace Agreement, if implemented in a timely, inclusive and consensual fashion by the parties, could have a positive impact on our efforts to stabilize the northern regions. They include interim security arrangements, including cantonment, as well as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security-sector reform programmes. MINUSMA and the United Nations family are expected to play a major role in those areas. The success of our combined efforts is contingent on the parties' commitment and determination to make much-needed compromises and concessions for the greater good of all Malians. The continued maintenance of the ceasefires is an important demonstration of that.

The recent spate of violence in some localities in the north has caused massive displacements of populations. That increased caseload puts an even heavier burden on the resources of host families, health and education facilities, and on water and sanitation infrastructures. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the humanitarian community in Mali, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, on their mobilization and quick response to address the displacement crisis.

The Peace Agreement opens prospects for Mali's recovery and long-term perspectives, with a view to reversing the setbacks induced by the political and security crisis. Scores of displaced people and refugees are returning home in spite of pressing humanitarian needs. It is therefore crucial to quickly re-establish basic social services nationwide, particularly in areas of return. That will facilitate the reintegration of people within their communities, ease potential tensions over meagre resources, guide early-recovery activities and support social cohesion.

Northern Mali remains one of the most difficult environments for peacekeeping. Its size, geographical environment, harsh climate and extremely poor or non-existent infrastructure continue to pose significant challenges to the Mission. To compound the situation, violent extremists and other enemies of peace continue to indiscriminately attack our forces and camps. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my condolences to the families and Governments of the fallen peacekeepers. I would also like to express my gratitude to all the countries contributing troops and police forces to MINUSMA and salute their courage.

We are likely to continue to face significant security and operational challenges in the immediate future despite the Peace Agreement. It is therefore critical that troop- and police-contributing countries have the capacities and capabilities required to operate safely and effectively in such an environment.

As the Security Council initiates discussions on MINUSMA's mandate renewal, neither the challenges nor the risks at hand should be underestimated. Nevertheless, our efforts to date and the results achieved thus far suggest that, with commitment, vision and adequate resources, those challenges are not insurmountable.

Going forward, it is critical to clearly define the roles of the international community in the implementation of the Agreement, based on comparative advantages. MINUSMA, by virtue of its mandate, and working together with partners, will naturally play a lead role in supporting the implementation of the Agreement on the ground. I see a particularly important role for MINUSMA in supporting security and defence, as well as the human rights and justice aspects of the Agreement. MINUSMA will also provide support to the functioning of the Comité de suivi de l'accord by leading its secretariat.

Mali has made significant strides in the last three years, thanks to a combination of national and international efforts. I would like to salute the Malian Government, the armed movements and the population for their courage and determination to peacefully resolve their differences. I would like to express my gratitude to all members of the mediation team, particularly Algeria, for its commitment and dedication throughout the negotiations process. And I would

like to thank France and the United States for their unwavering support to Mali and to the Mission.

In conclusion, the Peace Agreement provides an opportunity to start addressing the multifaceted challenges facing Mali. The responsibility for the implementation of the Agreement lies primarily with the Malians themselves, with the support of MINUSMA and the international community. It is my hope that the future mandate of MINUSMA can be oriented fully behind the peace process, including through continued good offices, active ceasefire monitoring and a leading role in the implementation of the Agreement.

The President: I thank Mr. Hamdi for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Diop.

Mr. Diop: Allow me to express our warmest congratulations to the delegation of Malaysia on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of June. By the same token, I would like to commend the delegation of Lithuania for the manner in which it conducted the work of the Council during the previous month.

(*spoke in French*)

I would like once again to express the deep gratitude of His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali, and that of the Government and people of Mali to our common Organization, the United Nations, and to Member States for their multifaceted and steady support of the peace process in Mali since January 2012. In a similar vein, I would like to reaffirm the confidence of the Government of Mali in the international mediation led by Algeria, which included the United Nations, the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union, the Organization for Islamic Cooperation and neighbouring nations such as Burkina Faso, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria and Chad.

I would like to particularly thank France for its role and decisive contribution in Mali and all its sacrifices. I also commend the United States of America for the decisive role it has played in helping to restore peace and stability in our country. I also take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his personal commitment to peace and reconciliation in Mali, but also to stability in the Sahel region in general.

I extend the heartfelt thanks of the Malian people to all friendly nations and international partner organizations that have shown their solidarity with Mali by sending their children, and often their experts, to defend the values underlying our humanity. I pay solemn tribute to the memory of all victims — civilians and soldiers, Malians and foreigners — who fell on the field of honour in Mali in defence of human dignity, freedom and democracy.

I reassert the active solidarity of the Government and people of Mali with the Governments and people of the Niger, Chad and Kenya, following the recent terrorist attacks, which caused a high number of casualties, particularly among the civilian population.

The Government of Mali has taken note of the Secretary-General's report on the evolution of the situation in Mali (S/2015/426) and would like to thank our friend Mr. Mongi Hamdi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), for his briefing. At the outset, I would like to note that the report should be updated, because it fails to mention the recent positive developments, including in relation to the peace process, that have taken place since 15 May.

I am particularly gratified to be meeting with the Security Council this morning, at this juncture when the peace and reconciliation process in Mali has made significant progress in the right direction, as evidenced by the finalization of the Bamako Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. Indeed, following the signature on 15 May of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, which came from the Algiers process, by the Government of Mali, the Platform coalition and members of the Coordination coalition, we welcome the signature of the Agreement on 20 June in Bamako by the other members of the Coordination that had not previously signed. Mali now has a consensual peace agreement that will serve as the general framework for the sustainable resolution of all dimensions of the most serious crisis in our country's history. This Agreement will set the seal once and for all on reconciliation among Malians.

The Bamako Agreement constitutes a balanced compromise that takes into account the legitimate concerns of all the parties while respecting the unity and territorial integrity of Mali and the secular and republican character of the State. It also establishes the conditions for long-term stability, because the reconciled Malian nation will effectively and relentlessly combat

terrorism, drug trafficking and other criminal networks, particularly in the area of irregular migration.

The signature of the Agreement by all the Malian parties, however, is not enough in itself. The greatest difficulty at the moment remains the effective and full implementation of the provisions of this valuable and, I must emphasize, historic instrument. For its part, the Government of Mali, under the authority of the President of the Republic, Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, once again reaffirms its steadfast determination to honour all its commitments under the Agreement. We expect the same of the other Malian parties, whose good faith and commitment in the matter we do not doubt. We also call upon the international community to honour its commitments and to continue its support for thorough and full implementation of the Agreement.

As Council members will remember, on 25 June 2014, the Security Council adopted resolution 2164 (2014), extending the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, or MINUSMA. As the Council once again prepares to extend that mandate, I would like to emphasize that the Mission's future mandate should take into account the positive developments in the Malian peace process. In that regard, the Government would like the future mandate of MINUSMA to be based essentially on the implementation of the Agreement for Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, as highlighted a moment ago by the Secretary-General's Special Representative.

In our view, therefore, MINUSMA should support the following: political dialogue and national reconciliation; the Government's efforts in the area of security, stabilization and the protection of civilian populations; the re-establishment of the State's authority throughout the country; the reconstruction of the Malian security sector; the promotion and upholding of human rights; and humanitarian aid. Specifically, and in view of the lessons learned in recent times, the Government of Mali requests the members of the Security Council to take into account certain priorities in the future mandate of MINUSMA.

First, with regard to support for the political process designed to resolve the crisis and ensure reconciliation in Mali, the Government invites the Security Council to give MINUSMA a mandate to help the Malian authorities and all the Malian parties to effectively and fully implement the Agreement. Particularly important are the continuation of the good-offices missions of MINUSMA, intended to anticipate, prevent, mitigate and resolve conflicts; support for the Comité de suivi, led by Algeria, and for the central role that the Government of Mali will play in the implementation of the Agreement; enhancement of cooperation between MINUSMA and the Malian authorities — a point on which I would place particular emphasis; and the re-establishment of confidence between MINUSMA and the people of Mali, who are in no way hostile to the force's intervention in the country; quite the contrary. In addition, the human, material and financial resources of MINUSMA should be strengthened to meet the challenges of security, early recovery and development in the implementation of the mandate of this important tool.

The Malian Government's second priority is security, stabilization and the protection of civilians. It calls on the Security Council to once again authorize MINUSMA to help the Malian authorities to stabilize the main urban areas, in particular in the country's northern regions, remove threats and take steps to prevent the return of armed elements to those areas. The Council should also renew its authorization for MINUSMA to support the Malian authorities so as to coordinate the international efforts to canton the armed groups; develop and implement the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme for former combatants; and dismantle such groups. The Council should also renew its authorization for MINUSMA to protect civilians imminently threatened with physical violence, in particular women and children threatened by conflict, especially those who are victims of sexual violence.

To that end, MINUSMA must be invited to expand its presence in the north of the country, particularly in areas where civilians are in danger; support the implementation of the ceasefire and confidence-building measures on the ground; and enhance its operational coordination with the Malian defence and security forces. The DDR programme, which is important to the implementation of the Agreement, must be taken in hand, and all combatants from armed groups who do not join the defence and security forces must be able to benefit from socioeconomic rehabilitation programmes.

We feel that the Council should demand in particular that the battalions needed for the establishment of the MINUSMA rapid deployment force be made operational, something that has not yet happened even

though the force was envisaged in resolution 2164 (2014).

Secondly, the mechanisms for observing the ceasefire and implementing the Agreement should also become operational. Next, we will not cease demanding that resources needed to provide MINUSMA with surge capability be made available. Then the use of every available means of preventing and avoiding the threat and return of terrorist groups, drug traffickers and other forces hostile to the implementation of the Agreement — including, I would reiterate, the establishment of a regional rapid deployment force, as recently advocated by ECOWAS, the African Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation — must be authorized. The Security Council should also demand that the armed groups that signed the Agreement be clearly distinguished from terrorist groups, drug traffickers and other hostile forces.

The third priority for the Government of Mali is support for the re-establishment of the State's authority throughout the country, for the reconstruction of the Malian security sector, for the promotion and upholding of human rights and for humanitarian aid. The Government would like the new mandate of MINUSMA to take the following into account.

First and as a matter of absolute priority is support for the re-establishment of the State's authority, the reconstruction of the security sector and the provision of basic social services. Such support will be an initial test of the commitment and credibility of all parties to the Agreement. The Special Representative referred just now to the fact that the people are demanding the restoration of basic social services. That is absolutely true, but above all they are specifically demanding the restoration of the Malian State, which will enable us to create the conditions necessary for restoring the administration, restoring basic social services and creating a minimum level of security. Here I should also stress the importance of assisting the Malian authorities with training and other forms of support for demining and the destruction of improvised explosive devices.

Another issue is ensuring the security of humanitarian convoys, including by opening humanitarian corridors and implementing an emergency humanitarian package. I would like to emphasize that last issue, setting up the emergency humanitarian package. This is not a new problem. During the negotiation process the Government party put on the table the need for all sides to agree on a minimum humanitarian action package that would make it possible to ease the people's suffering. Unfortunately, that idea did not receive the hoped-for support, but now that the Agreement has been signed, it is one of the top priority tasks we should tackle with the help of the United Nations, and particularly the agencies within whose purview it falls, along with the assistance of our financial partners.

Next is combating terrorism and trafficking of every kind within the framework of cooperation between, on the one hand, Operation Barkhane and the Malian armed forces, and, on the other, between MINUSMA and the Malian armed forces and security forces. And of course all three should be able to work together, with the Malian forces in the centre.

Then comes support for the national authorities in combating organized crime, especially drug trafficking. In our view, that particular point should be one of the innovations in the new resolution. It is true that one can create a framework for countering terrorism with the help of the Barkhane force. Organized crime, particularly drug trafficking, is the source fuelling the conflict, and as long as we do not deal properly with the issue — which the Agreement does not address sufficiently — we will never reach a definitive solution to the crisis, because drugs are feeding every party to this conflict. Thus I believe it is absolutely essential, with the help of the United Nations and every partner involved, that we launch a strong initiative to fight drug trafficking.

Next is support in organizing and securitizing elections, particularly those relating to the country's territorial and political reorganization through the regionalization process, as well as in our work on structural projects designed to benefit the people and areas affected by the crisis.

Following the decisions taken by ECOWAS and the African Union at their respective summits, which took place on 17 and 18 May in Accra and 14 and 15 June in Johannesburg, the Government of Mali would like to urge the Security Council in its turn to ensure that it is the Malian armed forces alone that have the right and the legitimacy to occupy any area of their national territory as part of their sovereign mission to secure the country's borders, its people and their property. Any other occupation by irregular forces is therefore illegal and should end, and the Agreement should support that.

Furthermore, in his current report, the Secretary-General recommends the deployment of 40 military observers. The Government takes note of the recommendation but asks that posts be created for liaison officers to work with the Malian armed forces and security forces so that the deficiencies in collaboration and cooperation between our forces and those of the United Nations can be remedied.

Here I hope I may comment on the proposal to deploy 40 military observers, since we believe it important that the Secretariat clarify the concept and indicate more specifically how those additional elements will work with those already in place, including both the Mixed Technical Commission on Security and the mobile observation units — how they will work together and what will be the role of the Government in relation to the observations they will perform. We are totally willing to continue our dialogue with our friends in the United Nations and the Secretariat on the issue, and we think it should enable us to move forward.

The Government of Mali is also very concerned about the development of terrorist activities and drug trafficking in the region. I note that the report addresses those major concerns only fleetingly, and I was surprised to see that in fact terrorism is not mentioned anywhere in the report. That is a serious question. What has changed in our vocabulary? We know how high a price the Mission itself has paid, with about 50 troops killed, basically owing to terrorism. We have all been asking why terrorism is not mentioned as such in the Secretary-General's report.

In order to defend against that threat, the Government of Mali calls on the Security Council to thoroughly consider the possibility of authorizing the deployment of a regional rapid reaction force put together by the countries of the region. I realize that at the moment there is no great enthusiasm for the idea, but I would like to explain. I think we should take a longer view. The African Union has been tasked with looking further into that option and approaching the United Nations and Operation Barkhane regarding their support.

The basic aim of such an initiative is not to replace operations already under way — we particularly welcome Barkhane's lifesaving action in the fight against terrorism — but we also know that it is important to create capacity within a country such as Mali, like our neighbours Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mauritania, the Niger and Chad, a capacity enabling us to fight these threats over the long term. As we know, terrorism has no sell-by date. This is a fight that will continue, and our countries need help in developing their own capacities. On the way, we will have to depend on the capacities that are already there, but it is absolutely critical for us that we not be denied the opportunity to consider how to set up a regional intervention force. If we find something better, so much the better, but the important thing is that we start to create a regional and national capacity for countering terrorism, because it is our soldiers, not just those from foreign countries, who must put their lives on the line for that cause. We are ready to make those sacrifices for what we asking for, but we ask that our units be adequately trained and equipped to be able to enter that fight.

I would like to end as I began, by once again emphasizing that the peace process in Mali has made major, real and significant progress towards the achievement of national reconciliation and the harmonious development of the country as a whole, so that there is a place in it for every one of its sons and daughters. They are all Malians, and they all have the right to live in dignity in their own country and to participate in the political and social life of Mali.

The implementation phase that is beginning will therefore be the most important step of all. While it will unquestionably be a difficult and complicated one, we at least have the good fortune of possessing a road map, because we have the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, which sets out what the next steps must be. Speaking for the Government of Mali, I would once again like to reiterate its determination to honour all of its commitments and to work inclusively with all the Malian participants to ensure a Malian-owned process, one including members of civil society, who are also asking for the right to be at that table to contribute to the restoration of peace and reconciliation in our country.

In the next few days, the Government will establish a national mechanism responsible for implementing the Agreement. The international monitoring committee provided for in the Agreement, which was established in Bamako on 20 June on the margins of the signing ceremony, is ready to begin. In that regard, we expect, we hope and we demand that MINUSMA will play an important role.

We think that the national mechanism should assume the lead in the implementation of the Agreement. It can

serve as liaison to the international Comité de suivi provided for in the Agreement and as the instrument of national ownership of the process of implementation by Malian men and women. The Government will make available all the human and material resources required to act in that regard.

Before concluding, I would like to call on the international community to continue its support and to honour its commitments for the effective and comprehensive implementation of the Bamako Agreement and a guarantee of lasting stability in Mali and in the region. I have no doubt that the Security Council will play its full part in that regard.

The President: I thank Mr. Diop for his statement.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.